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#FollowTheFacts: Foreign Affairs Democrats Push for an Independent Commission to Investigate Russian Interference (/press-releases?ID=CFAFEE4B-210C-4D88-BADA-6F1BFB4EE010)

March 9, 2017

Today, Democrats on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs were unified in demanding that Congress **#FollowTheFacts** on Russia's interference in American democracy.

Members pushed for the Committee to mark up the **Swalwell-Cummings Protecting Our Democracy Act** (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/356>) to establish an independent commission to investigate Russia's criminal meddling, and the **Engel-Connolly SECURE Our Democracy Act** (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/530>), which would sanction those responsible.

Highlights from today's hearing:

Ranking Member Eliot Engel: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHCaPxbzqmo>) *"This Committee is the gateway to a full, independent investigation. The bill to create that commission—the Protecting Our Democracy Act—introduced by Mr. Swalwell and Mr. Cummings, is solely within our jurisdiction and is waiting for this Committee to mark it up. We can't wait any longer."*

Rep. Brad Sherman: (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_jDxT3pPG3s&feature=youtu.be) *"Mr. Chairman, we need more than one hearing on this subject. And we need, ultimately, a 9/11-style commission...we do need tough sanctions to respond to what Russia has done."*

Rep. Gregory Meeks: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JoB3QknAWzA&feature=youtu.be>) *"When I look at threats to our democracy, I think that it is important that we have a 9/11-style commission set up. The mark up of the Swalwell and Cummings 'Protecting Our Democracy Act' is tremendously important for all of us."*

Rep. Albio Sires: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grvZBimUccc&feature=youtu.be>) *"When it came down to this election and the influence of the Russians on the election, I think it's legitimate: I think we should have a 9/11 commission to look at all this."*

Rep. Gerald Connolly: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9AHY6rx38rg&feature=youtu.be>) *"Numerous members of the Administration have in fact had contacts with Russian intelligence officials and the Ambassador, and, what's interesting is, kinda covering it up... Why in the world would any American Administration want to be enabling, seemingly, this pernicious, insidious effort by the Russian government?"*

Rep. Ted Deutch: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4g62-KnZyQ&feature=youtu.be>)
"The American people, Mr. Chairman, want a full and a fair and a bipartisan investigation into not just what happened in this election, but they want an investigation into Mr. Trump's connections to Russia."

Rep. Karen Bass: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7dzvlwmvL1E&feature=youtu.be>)
"This is about our future elections and our standing in the world. With this in mind, I think that our NATO allies would benefit from an investigation, the 9/11-style investigation that's in the Cummings-Swalwell Bill."

Rep. William Keating: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSYYrbzsnk8&feature=youtu.be>)
"Honestly, as nice as this hearing is today, it's not gonna accomplish what the American public needs or what our allies need overseas, and that's an independent commission...a special prosecutor...this committee, I think will take a role in sanctions on Russia as well."

Rep. David Cicilline: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wt7xYYyoeCc&feature=youtu.be>)
"It confounds me that there are members of this body who do not support the independent commission. The very fundamentals of our democracy are at stake."

Rep. Ami Bera: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=igL0HVFm0ik&feature=youtu.be>)
"If we want to call an independent investigation looking beyond 2016, looking into the last administration, great, let's do it, but this is about protecting our democracy."

Rep. Lois Frankel: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQG0usKu0-k&feature=youtu.be>)
"The Russians trying to take over our elections with all that they did, that is very, very, bad. We need to start having some independent reviews and hearings until we get to the bottom of this."

Rep. Robin Kelly: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u13cjqqNJVc&feature=youtu.be>)
"It is my hope also, as we've heard, that this Committee will take the initiative and mark up the SECURE Our Democracy Act and Protecting Our Democracy Act to get to the bottom of Russian interference in U.S. elections and prevent future actions."

Rep. Brendan Boyle: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMuV0nexc6g&feature=youtu.be>)

“Based on the conclusion, the unanimous conclusion of the 16 intelligence agencies in the United States, it is abundantly clear that we need a 9/11 style commission. A bipartisan, nonpartisan commission, modeled after the 9/11 commission to investigate and determine what exactly happened.”

Rep. Norma Torres: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a2D5WDbOMVA&feature=youtu.be>)

“Our electorate, our voters need to know what happened. That is why I will join my colleagues in calling on an independent, fact-finding investigation, a commission of some sort something like the 9/11 commission.”

Rep. Brad Schneider: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ESPh0ZKth00>)

“I add my voice to calling for an independent commission to investigate the Russian efforts to interfere in our elections and how that would play out.”

Rep. Thomas Suozzi: (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjzrB7c_Zrk&feature=youtu.be)

“I appreciate both ambassadors’ comments about that they both support the idea of an investigative body, similar to a 9/11 commission... There’s even more we can figure out and tie more of these connections together if we were to do this type of investigation.”

Rep. Adriano Espaillat: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jn58AUBgMak&feature=youtu.be>)

“I don’t think we can overstate this, that we need a 9/11-style commission. We need a sanctions response. The DOJ needs to appoint a special prosecutor—one that unlike the Attorney General is independent with no links associated with Russia.”

Rep. Ted Lieu: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r805jSVrGOo&feature=youtu.be>)

“I’ve always believed that where there’s smoke, there’s fire. And there is a lot of smoke right now, which is why I join my colleagues in a call for a 9/11-style bipartisan commission to look at the Trump-Russia ties.”

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